

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 VIENTI 00134 260951Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W
-----260956Z 048975 /22

O 260910Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7603

S E C R E T VIENTIANE 0134

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR AFSP APER
SUBJ: EMBASSY VIENTIANE STAFFING PATTERN

REF: (A) STATE 17179, (B) VIENTIANE 120, (C) VIENTIANE 125

1. WE ARE PROCEEDING WITH ARRANGEMENTS FOR ORDERLY AND EXPEDITIOUS DEPARTURE OF PERSONS LISTED PARA 2 REF A. WE PLAN TO HAVE PEOPLE MOVE OUT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE BUT ARE NOT AT THIS POINT SETTING FIXED TIME-TABLE NOR ORDER OF MOVEMENT SINCE CIRCUMSTANCES AFFECTING THEIR DEPARTURE MAY CHANGE. WE WILL INFORM DEPARTMENT AS PERSONNEL ACTUALLY DEPART. WE ALSO WILL SEND SEPARATE NOTES INFORMING LPDR FOREIGN MINISTRY OF INDIVIDUAL DEPARTURES.

2. RE PARA 8 REFTTEL, WE DO NOT EXPECT TO GO BELOW TWELVE PERSONS AT POST BARRING ILLNESS OR OTHER EMERGENCIES. NEVERTHELESS, WE CONSIDER THAT LPDR WOULD HAVE NO COMPUNCTION IN INSISTING ANY TIME IT WANTED TO THAT WE REDUCE OUR PERSONNEL FURTHER AND WILL NOT NEED ANY EXCUSE TO DO SO.

3. RE PARA 10, WE PLAN TO MAINTAIN WIRELESS FILE AND ENOUGH LOCAL PERSONNEL TO OPERATE IT.

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4. COINCIDENTALLY, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OLSON OF AREA TELECOMMUNICATIONS OFFICE MANILA VISITED EMBASSY JANUARY 25-26 AND WE DISCUSSED QUESTION OF COMMO PERSONNEL WITH HIM.

5. AS REPORTED REF B IN MED CHANNEL, ADMIN COUNSELOR

SWEDENBURG WAS MEDICALLY EVACUATED TO BANGKOK JANUARY 24. BEFORE DEPARTURE HE PLANNED TO RETURN TO VIENTIANE JANUARY 28, BUT WE HAVE NOT RECEIVED CONFIRMATION FROM BANGKOK OF WHETHER HE WILL BE ABLE TO MEET THAT SCHEDULE. IF HIS CONDITION SHOULD BE SERIOUS ENOUGH TO PRECLUDE HIS RETURN FOR ANY LENGTHY PERIOD, THAT WOULD OF COURSE SOMEWHAT AFFECT OUR PLANS FOR REDUCTION AND WE MIGHT HAVE TO REQUEST THE DEPARTMENT TO SEND OUT EITHER A TEMPORARY REPLACEMENT UNTIL THE NEW ADMIN OFFICER ARRIVES OR ELSE EXPEDITE THE LATTER'S ARRIVAL.

6. PAO INTENDS REPORT PLANS FOR CLOSURE OF POST SOONEST. LOWER CLASSIFICATION OF THAT MESSAGE AND OTHER ELEMENTS OF REDUCTION, HOWEVER, AWAIT RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS WE RAISED REF C. IN PARTICULAR, PAO HAS TO INFORM HIS LOCAL STAFF OF CLOSURE IN ORDER BEGIN MAKING ARRANGEMENTS.

7. MOREOVER, WE WILL HAVE TO LET OUR OTHER LOCAL EMPLOYEES KNOW WHAT IS GOING ON AS WE BEGIN SHIPMENT OF PERSONAL EFFECTS FROM VIENTIANE.

8. FINALLY, WE WILL HAVE TO DEAL WITH EMBASSY BANGKOK REGARDING OUTWARD SHIPMENTS FROM HERE AS WELL AS INCOMING SHIPMENTS WHICH ARE NOW WAITING THERE.

9. SINCE WE HAVE TOLD LPDR THAT WE WILL COMPLY WITH ITS REQUEST FOR REDUCTION OF OUR PERSONNEL, AND SINCE
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SOVIETS AT LEAST KNOW ABOUT THE REQUEST, AS REPORTED SEPTTEL, REQUEST INSTRUCTIONS SOONEST AS TO INFORMATION WE CAN PASS TO OUR LOCAL EMPLOYEES, OTHER FOREIGN SERVICE UNITS, AND, IF ASKED, TO FRIENDLY FOREIGN EMBASSIES AND PRESS.

10. CONCERNING THE SIX MARINES. WE EXPECT NO DIFFICULTY IN KEEPING SOME MARINES ON HAND UNTIL THE ARRIVAL OF AT LEAST TWO SY REPLACEMENTS. MEANWHILE, IN VIEW OF THE SPECIFIC LAO REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPARTURE OF PERSONNEL OF A MILITARY CHARACTER, WE PLAN TO START SHIPPING THE MARINES OUT PIECEMEAL AS NEW ONWARD ASSIGNMENTS FOR THEM ARE FOUND. COLONEL APPEZZATO HAS ONWARD ASSIGNMENTS FOR TWO OF THEM HE, RSO AND NCOIC ASSURE ME THAT WE CAN OPERATE SATISFACTORILY WITH THE REMAINING FOUR. AS A MATTER OF FACT, WE HAVE AT TIMES FUNCTIONED DURING THE LAST YEAR AND A HALF WITH A TOTAL OF FOUR MARINES, AND COLONEL APPEZZATO TELLS ME THAT THIS SITUATION HAS OCCURRED AT OTHER POSTS.

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